



Annual Report of the RMLL President
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As RMLL President I attended ALA Board of Directors meetings, represented the RMLL on appeals to the ALA, coordinated with ALA executive and staff members, worked with the rest of the RMLL Executive (including instituting monthly teleconference meetings), assisted the RMLL commissioners on issues, and participated in league marketing efforts (ie., graduating midget information nights and combines).

Organizationally it was a much better year than in 2018. Having all players register independently through RAMP gave us, and the ALA, a better indication of how many players play in our league. For example, in previous years because we used the July 1 deadline, there were players who participated earlier in the year, but were not on any team's final roster. This problem was rectified in 2019. The registration process can still be improved, but 2019 was a good year.

There were two ongoing challenges that confronted the RMLL in 2019. The first was fan behavior. For example, in one bad week, we saw the following incidents:

1. JrB Tier 2 game: fans (including the game announcer) abusing refs and ref evaluator
2. JrB Tier 2 game: fan (likely parent of a visiting player) abusing arena staff that resulted in police being called
3. JrB Tier 1 game: fans (likely friends of home team players) abusing visiting team including racial comments
4. SrC game: fan (an undressed player) being ejected from the arena for ref abuse.

As a league we cannot tolerate this type of behaviour. Teams need to do a better job of controlling their fans (whether they are the home or visiting team). In each case, these are not anonymous fans, but are well known to their respective teams.

The second challenge was social media. In the vast majority of cases, the teams do a very good job of promoting the game of lacrosse. Twitter, in particular, is an effective tool for updating the scores of games. That being said, there were some unfortunate incidents where team accounts used social media to criticize refs, opposing players/teams, and the ALA/CLA. Individual accounts associated with specific teams also contributed to this problem. The dilemma of free speech vs ALA/RMLL social media guidelines was a challenge that the RMLL faced at various times during the 2019 season.

Beyond challenges, we also saw organizations step up for the good of the league. One example I want to cite is the City of Fort Saskatchewan and the Fort Saskatchewan Rebels. During the JrB Tier 2 provincials in Sherwood Park, there was a problem with the floor which made it unplayable. Within a few hours a new floor was found at the Fort Saskatchewan Jubilee Recreation Centre and the rest of the provincials went off without a hitch. This is the sort of cooperation, to ensure that the players had a proper experience, that makes the lacrosse community so good to be a part of.

One of the more rewarding duties was working with the rest of the RMLL Executive. A good and dedicated group of volunteers who would often look beyond their

own particular job description to focus on the betterment of lacrosse as a whole. It is a very functional executive.

One of the major projects that I was involved with in 2019 was organizing the coaching Super Clinic in April. I worked with David Westwood and Greg Hart in organizing the event. As with previous years, we ran the clinic in conjunction with the referee über clinic. We also had special guest speakers/instructors attending the two clinics including:

- Walt Christianson (former Assistant Coach Calgary Roughnecks & Colorado Mammoth, former Head Coach Victoria Shamrocks Senior A)
- John Kilbride (SrB Mountaineers Coach, and former Calgary Roughnecks player)
- Kane Swartout (SrB Mountaineers Goalie)
- Lisa Hoffart (former Calgary Roughnecks physical therapist)

In total 39 coaches took the clinic for certification and 15 more took it for professional development. There was some continuity with previous years. For example, the required training was provided to the referees and coaches as per CLA guidelines. There was a JrB exhibition game between the Calgary Shamrocks and Lethbridge Barracudas with all of the coaches/officials watching and taking notes. For 2019, we also tried a few new things. For example, we continued the Friday night social for coaches, but turned it into a chalk and talk session on drills that was facilitated by Bratt, Christianson, and Kilbride. In addition, on Saturday afternoon Lisa Hoffart led a session on concussions. We also, after an absence of several years, included a full JrB practice put on by the Okotoks Marauders on the Sunday afternoon. The practice plan was distributed to the coaches and they could see it implemented on the floor.

Finally, I want to offer my public congratulations to the Calgary Shamrocks for winning the 2019 Founder's Cup! Great work to all players, coaches, and staff! Additional congratulations go to the Okotoks Raiders who won their first ever game at a Minto Cup against a non-Alberta team and then narrowly lost the semi-final in overtime to the Victoria Shamrocks.